



Jim Newberry, Mayor

LEXINGTON-FAYETTE URBAN COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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City plans work on downtown sidewalks, streetscape

The city is in the beginning stages of work to improve downtown sidewalks and the downtown streetscape, Mayor Jim Newberry announced today.

During a news conference this morning, Newberry and Vice Mayor Jim Gray offered an update on the work. "We are just beginning, but we all recognize how important this work is for the future of our downtown. In addition, we want our city to be in good shape when the world comes calling for the Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games in 2010," Newberry said. "Our downtown sidewalks are not pedestrian friendly and, in some places, they are not safe."

Vice Mayor Gray said, "I join Mayor Newberry and so many citizens and council members in believing we can create an A+ downtown that equals our A+ rural landscape. And this project will help us get there."

A committee of government officials and downtown representatives, including the Downtown Lexington Corp., has been working on the issue, as envisioned in the Downtown Master Plan, for several months.

The first step was to survey downtown sidewalks and the streetscape in an effort to get an accurate picture of the problem. The high tech survey was completed over the summer. The study area (see attached map) included the downtown area and stretched to the University of Kentucky and Transylvania University along Limestone Street -- one goal is to make it more inviting for college students to come downtown.

Recently, with input from the committee, a consultant was hired to formulate a downtown sidewalk and streetscape master plan for design improvements and to set priorities. The consultant hired was KKG (Kinzelman Kline Gossman), based in Cincinnati.

There will be many opportunities for public input into this process, Newberry said. The consultant is planning a number of public meetings, early next year. Dates will be announced in the future.

However, Newberry said the sources of funding for improvements remain uncertain. "Sidewalk and streetscape improvements are expensive," he said. "During this process we will consider various funding mechanisms, including state and federal grants, property owner participation and private sector gifts."